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CONSIDERATIONS

UPON THE STATE OF

PUBLIC AFFAIRS,

IN THE YEAR MDCCXCVIII.

PART THE THIRD.

THE DOMESTIC STATE AND GENERAL POLICY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

"Ego ita comperio omnia regna, Civitates Nationes, quibus eo
"prosperum imperium habuisse dum apud eos res confilia
"valuerunt."

SALLUST.

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1798.

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CONSIDERATIONS, &c.

BEFORE I launch into the career which I have opened, and while I prepare for that important task to which I have devoted the labour of my mind, it may not be altogether improper if I pause for a moment to collect breath, and throw my eyes back over the space through which I have run, to the point from which I departed. But it is impossible to turn the head or to press forward, to think of the past or examine the present, to remember what we have been or consider what we are, without feeling an awful joy, and indulging a pious pride, for the

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circumstances we have escaped, and for what we are not.

Previous therefore to every retrospect, and preliminary to every reflexion, I call the public attention I will not say, but the public piety and gratitude, to that Providence which has often upheld and defended these kingdoms under many perils and from many enemies, and from the worst of them, our own vices, passions, and corruptions; but never more mercifully or more visibly than in the deliverance we have experienced from the great and imminent dangers to which we were daily exposed during the negotiations for A PEACE AT LILLE.

We have followed, with joyful and expanded hearts, our common father and our sovereign to the temple. We have offered the public vows and thanksgivings for victories granted to our arms, for the triumphs
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of our flag, and the empire of our seas.—Shall we return no humble act of gratitude and devotion for the ruin we have escaped and infamy we have avoided? Is there no piety, no prostration for defence and safety, and calamities from which we have been rescued? Do we reserve all our religion for the pride of success? Have we no feeling nor sense of deliverance?

But if it were permitted to weigh, and balance, and compare the gifts and mercies of Providence, and to examine and discuss occasions of piety and motives of thankfulness, is there any man endowed with the sense and feelings of a man, who could pause or hesitate between the measure and magnitude of these favours, for which we are all come at length to acknowledge our gratitude? Is there a being possessed of thought and reason, who could doubt which boon is the greatest, which mercy the most signal and effective,

effective? or fear to pronounce which day has saved the country, the eleventh of October or the seventh of September; the triumph of Lord Duncan, or the disappointment of Lord Malmesbury; the victory of the admiral or the defeat of the ambassador? But that illustrious victory could not change an article in our capitulation. The king's ministers boasted of their moderation, as they called that fit of memorable despair in which they projected the surrender of their country! They were still eager to sign those faultless terms, and subscribe those glorious conditions*. Lord Duncan reaped but unprofitable laurels. Their shadow was not suffered to fall upon his country. The first care of those who governed it, was to separate themselves from his fame and disclaim the benefit of his victory.— The noble admiral could not save his country, because his country would not accept of salvation; but the noble minister brought back

* Declaration of October, 1797.

with him his country's safety, because the enemy would not accept of it's ruin.—The victorious commander, and a defeated enemy, could not serve an unwilling state; but the defeated minister, and an unwilling enemy, have preserved it against it's will.—The noble admiral had every help from human means, from his own undaunted mind, from skill, from courage and perseverance. The valour of his fleet, the justice of his cause, the auspices and character of the British name and arms seemed to assure, and prophecy, and conspire to success: But the noble minister has saved his country by a defeat in which there is no human participation nor concurrence. His glory is undivided and unshared, or shared only with the enemy who rejected him.—We fought against ourselves and were not conquered; we called in the enemy and he would not come; we were saved in spite of our own cowardice; we have survived our own treasons and despair.—And
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can any one pretend to doubt where is the juster cause of gratitude, and the more visible interference from above? When we were preserved from the enemy by means of our own virtues, or from ourselves in spite of our treachery and baseness? Whether the hand of heaven is more conspicuous, when it deigns to prosper a just and noble effort, and entitled by it's own strength and prudence to succeed, or when it arrests the course and proclivity of ruin: when it extricates from dangers of our own contriving, protects from our own conspiracy, and saves us from our own dagger?

But we are at war still! The threats of the enemy still vibrate on our ears; the tax-gatherer reminds us four times a year of the intolerable evils of war; the exciseman brings back to our sentimental memory the horror of arms and tenderness for human blood! But our youth are disciplined, and
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our shores covered with patriot-defenders!—
 Dreadful state! Intolerable fatigue! Burthens
 insupportable! Better, however, than the
 levies and the ransoms of the enemy; better
 than hostile camps and armed barbarians in the
 land! Better than repose, better than disarm-
 mament, better than confidence in the perfidi-
 ous and cruel foe, who has turned even peace
 itself into strife and hostility! With all our
 taxes, all our exertions, all our work and
 truest calamities, there is some consolation left
 us, we can contemplate what is *not* our state,
 what we do *not* fear nor suffer, the yoke
 we do *not* feel, and the crime we have *not*
 committed.

The navies of Spain, of Venice, and of
 Holland, are not assembled in the port of
 Brest.—The spoilers of Italy sit upon their
 own hills, breathing vengeance against us,
 but desolating and devouring their own coun-
 try. — Their impotent malice, while it
 threatens England, preys upon France, op-
 presses

presses their own cities, and consumes their
 native fields. They expect in vain the squa-
 drons that are to convoy and escort the plague
 into the bosom of their enemy. They turn
 their eye in vain to Cadiz and the Texel. No
 sail, no distant top-mast, no speck upon the
 ocean cheers their despondency, no glimpse
 of hope from the boundary of their horizon.
 The east brings no promise, the sun-set no
 consolation. A three weeks peace has *not*
 raised the blockade of Spain and Holland!
 Has not collected the squadrons of their slaves,
 nor unlocked the mouths of their own rivers.
 The jacobin fleets are imprisoned in their own
 harbours, protected by the batteries of their
 own shores, formidable to nothing but an ex-
 hausted treasury, to the people whom it grinds,
 and the tyrants that turn it's wheels. The
 limbs are intercepted, and cut off from the
 body of revolution. The monstrous head
 cannot wield nor reach the dispersed and pal-
 lided members; the vassals of emancipating
 France,

France, still bless the friendly enemy who confines them in their harbours, and prohibits them from adding arms to their tyrants, and rivets to their chains. The peace with Spain, with Prussia, with Rome, with Genoa: that with Holland, Venice, and Switzerland, are still but so many truces and cessations, armistices of circumstance, convenience, or necessity. Unratified, unsanctioned, unconfirmed.—The fate of Europe has *not* been decided. The independence of it's states has *not* been yielded up. The law of nature and of nations still exists, the public code has *not* been trampled out. Violence and plunder have *not* been ratified; partition and spoil have not driven law and justice from the world; wickedness is *not* safe, usurpation trembles still upon it's infirm and bloody thrones; the terrors of the terrorist are greater than he inspires. There is nothing fixed in the general disorder, nothing irretrievable in the public calamities; the egotist doubts, and the mind

looks back to justice and retribution. There is hope for Europe, there is life in our quarrel, our honour is entire.

The rebellion of Ireland, the conspiracies of London and Manchester, the clubs and plots of all the villains in all the world, the revolt of thieves and prostitutes, the insurrections of vice and ignorance, the reforms of plunderers and assassins, the theories of atheists, the constitutions of outlaws, are all cut off from the mother wickedness at Paris, from the great source and river head, from the reservoir and native-spring of immorality, subversion, massacre, violation, and methodized barbarity at the Luxembourg. A French envoy does *not* discipline our whigs nor array our correspondents; a diplomatic general, an armed ambassador, does *not* display the pride and bloody colours of his country in some square of London; the united Englishmen are *not* marshalled in the barracks

barracks of France. There is yet in our great metropolis no French police, no Place de la Revolution, no Hotel de la République, no sanctuary, no asylum, no privilege, no verge, no palace-right, no board of green-cloth for conspiracy and insurrection. Where we can find our jacobin we may seize him; we may arrest our traitor in the caves, and holes, and ruins where he lurks. The king's writ runs, and the Buonapartes and the Bernadottes have as yet no jurisdiction, no palatine authority in England.

Perhaps I exaggerate, perhaps these are figures of amplification, creatures of my fancy, spirits that I conjure up at will to frighten and appal!—Spirits at least that cannot pass their circle at Vienna, unable or unwilling or forbidden to range our happy soil, or haunt the profound and wholesome slumbers of a general peace! It is absurd and childish to tremble at such an hour, and under the propitious

circumstances which belong to it ; namely, the ratification of violence, the sanction of wrong itself, the triumph of injustice, and the liberty of every crime ! A peace of plunder will charm the spirit of extortion ; a peace of humiliation exorcise the demon of revenge and insult ; a peace of perfidy will lay the ghost of fraud and usurpation.—The French avarice will be satisfied, their ambition gorged, their pride, their cruelty, their injustice, their contempt and hatred of mankind contented and filled up ; that is to say, having gained their point of depraving and dishonouring the state of man and his nature ; having become masters and conquerors in their war against humanity, and being acknowledged sovereigns of the earth by the general admission of wickedness ; having rivetted the chains of barbarism upon our neck, and triumphed over the very name of faith and virtue, and the dignity of our species, they will in that moment of
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exultation, in that gush of victory, at that flood of prosperity and success, lay down their hostility at once, desist from their malevolence, forsake their insolence, forbear from injury, and forget their sworn and rooted malice against every other name and nation of mankind! This will be the happy golden fruit of that general peace which we have projected. Every wind shall fail, and every storm subside. The extravagant and erring fiend will hie to his confine. No Jacobin will plot, no committee will conspire, no club have power to harm!

“ So hallowed and so gracious is the time.”

If I have exaggerated, it is without my knowledge and against my will. It is impossible for me, I confess, to look down with calmness from that overhanging crumbling cliff, upon whose extremest verge we trembled during so many weeks.—Let others contemplate with untroubled breasts and nerves of steel, from the brow of the precipice, that
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tempestuous surge whose roar we would not hear, whose surf we could not discover. Look down, who can, from the height and pinnacle of our present greatness, into that gulph of ruin; measure, who can preserve the tenour of his soul and the power of reason, the altitude of our glory, and gauge the abyss into which we would have descended:—where we would have plunged as into a refreshing wholesome stream, to wash off the dust and sweat of war, and invite oblivious slumbers and delightful dreams. I think, however, there is neither the matter nor the power of exaggeration; I think that a general peace would not have exempted us from a single danger to which we are now exposed, and that it would have exposed us to a thousand dangers from which we are exempted. I think that if there were in the whole natural or moral world a motive or a cause, that could restrain, or check, or mask, or silence the intolerable and intolerant ambition and insolence

and ambition and insolence of

of the French—if there were in the range and circle of their thought and policy a single reason and inducement, that could prevail with them to dissemble their contempt and malice, or delay for a moment their project of confusion and universal barbarism—that it would not be a general peace, upon the foundations proposed at Lille, or any peace which should leave them masters and arbiters of our fate: that it could not be a general peace founded upon any thing but the failure and defeat of their own projects, and the deliverance of the world from their own arms and conspiracy. I think, that if it had been possible for them to have abstained from the bloody and opprobrious scenes their ambassadors have acted at Rome and Vienna; if any circumstances could have humanized their disposition or suspended their ferocity, it would not have been a general peace, but the dangerous and critical state of the war with this country; but the expence of nine millions

and a half sterling per month *, which
 • their army of England', and their rafts and
 balloons, their chimerical engineers and mi-
 litary Bedlam cost them. It would not have
 been the absurd and degrading peace of
 Lille, but the wise and proud security, but
 the warlike position and menacing aspect
 of this armed and awakened nation. If
 Germany, and the sovereign of Germany,
 could have been spared or respected for
 another hour, it would have been from
 the power and not the humiliation of Eng-
 land; it would have been from her force,
 not her disarmament; from her greatness, and
 not her ruin. But since not even their own
 dangers and apprehensions, not the burthens
 and calamities they endure, and the uncer-
 tainty, to say no more of their own escape and
 destiny, could govern or *retard* their malice
 for a moment, what mockery, what foolery,
 what miserable drivelling is it not, to think

• M. Dumouriez's Speculative Sketch of Europe.

they

they would have refrained, if they had been freed at Lille from these dangers and disasters, and assured of their own dominion and impunity?

But, doubtless, it was the abject and humiliating terms of the peace of Udina which inspired the directory with contempt for the feeble sovereign who subscribed them! The insults offered to his imperial and royal majesty were the natural consequences of those unequal and inglorious conditions to which he consented! What then would have been our fate and lot at this time, if the peace had been concluded at Lille? What scale of insult and oppression, what gradation, series, and adjustment of insolence, what proportion of injury, what degree and adequate measure and increase of mockery and defiance awaited us, if that happy scheme had unhappily succeeded? But it is one of these popular and unweighed opinions which do mischief in the

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world,

world, and which are therefore to be refuted, that the peace of Udina contains any thing humiliating or prejudicial to the emperor. The house of Austria has been fully indemnified and more than compensated by that treaty. It has even profited by the commutations it has made both in absolute values and in relative importance, from the shape and compactness of its possessions, from their position upon the sea, and from the character of their inhabitants. What there is really of humiliation and loss in that peace, is the loss of honour, and the humiliation of virtue. It is not privation of territory, nor acknowledgment of inferiority, but it is privation of dignity, and abandonment of public faith. It is the admission of the new code of perfidy and force. It is the subscription to the new law of violence and France! The power, however, of the house of Austria, and it is power alone by which the peace of Udina, or any other peace can now be maintained, has not
been

been diminished. It was not the weakness of the court of Vienna that invited or anticipated the violation of the peace, which (however dissembled or delayed) is the natural consequence of it's own character and principle. It will never be broken with more perfidy than signed it; it cannot be annihilated by a greater treachery than ratified it.—But neither feebleness nor deficiency of military means and character, nor disparity of power, nor want of preparation provoked the new insult and aggression of France. If it could have been suspended, not only the war with England, but the warlike attitude of the emperor, and the protection he was ready to afford to the king of Naples, and in that event to Rome, and the cantons of Switzerland, would have had that effect. From every motive of policy, and from a real existing necessity, she would have avoided every pretext and colour of offence to the emperor. While her armies rotted on the coasts of the English chan-

nel, she was employed in the spoliation and dismemberment of Germany, in the plunder and conquest of the Helvetic body, in the secret revolution of Spain and Sardinia, and her fate hung upon that of a single expedition in the Mediterranean. She had still other cares and anxiety from her new republics in Italy, and the name of the emperor often struck through the silence of the night upon the ears of her centinels in Mantua and Milan! What causes for peace with Austria! The powers of the north negotiated at last, if not for the honour of their flag, for the privilege of their keel. America published the peculation of the directory, and decreed to defend her commerce. Even Prussia seemed inclined to protect the north of Germany, if not the right bank of the Rhine, to guarantee the remaining liberties of Europe, or to accede to a new coalition if she could obtain a new subsidy from England. What causes for peace with Austria! yet all were of no avail,

To the war in Italy and the war on the Rhine she knew herself unequal, and her subsequent conduct at Vienna is a confession of it, yet she could not abstain. The war on the continent was utterly incompatible with her favourite project of a descent upon England and the revolution in Ireland, yet she could not forbear; she sacrificed them all, to the dearer passion, the stronger irresistible desire of gratifying her contempt of other nations, and her hatred of mankind.

Does any one think I am expatiating upon foreign affairs and interests not our own? Am I discussing the concerns of Europe or of the court of Vienna? Is it possible to see or think of these things without the most direct and immediate inference to our own internal situation, and the dangers of our state? Are there statesmen above all who can read or feel these things without reflecting upon what might have been, what would have been, what must have

have been our actual position, if their counsels had been practical, if their plans had succeeded? Are there statesmen, who can think without trepidation, without horror, without remorse, upon that general peace which they projected, in which neither the balance of power, nor the restitution of territory, nor the name of justice, nor of honour, were interested or inserted? Can they think without shame, without repentance upon those opprobrious and unhappy terms, which, if they had been accepted, there was an end of the honour, and the independence, and the existence of their country! Can they doubt whether France would have hesitated to provoke *Them*, who has not feared to insult the great military power of the continent? That she would have respected *Them*, and half-disarmed and naked, who has not abstained from the emperor in the midst of warlike preparations and recruitings? And can they be so blinded by any vanity, any folly, any flattery, any species of self-

self-love and delusion, as not to see that the present safety, the present greatness, the present glory of this country are not their work, nor their praise, but the gift or the forbearance of the enemy! That we owe our state, under Providence, to no merit, no wisdom of theirs, but to the defeat of their projects and the failure of their schemes! That we have escaped by their disappointment; that we have been saved by their miscarriage; that we are a nation in spite of *Them*!

It appears to me, that I should not do my duty to the public, that I should not render the little service in my power to offer to my country, if I were to leave this important and extraordinary transaction in the power of doubt, artifice, or misapprehension; and I set it down as a protest to the present age, and a record to posterity. (if any thing of mine can endure.) We owe them truth at least, to whom it is uncertain whether we shall have
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any thing else to bequeath ! I set it down, in order, that in no future age, if our name and nation shall survive, it may be possible a second time for any ministers, to commit and expose the fortune of the empire, the fate and destinies of these mighty realms, to the choice and arbitrement of the enemy, to the chance of his folly, to the criterion of his madness, to the almost visible interposition from above ! I say of *any* ministers, for I give entire and willing credit to the present for the pureness of their intention, and the rectitude of their heart ; I render them unqualified and eager thanks for a thousand services performed with wisdom, ability, and vigour : But I can accept of no excuse nor equivalent, for that prostitution of trust and character, for that pliable and prostrate virtue, which yields to every gust of the people's breath, which turns with every eddy and every breeze, and makes of the king's council not the rudder, but the canvas of the state.

From these disastrous and degrading scenes I turn with alacrity and delight. I quit these dangerous and disgraceful conferences, to behold as if from the omen and auspices of their end, another and a better order of things spring up, a happier course, a beginning and encrease from above.—I turn too with relief and lightness of heart from the censure of men whose general conduct and character entitles them to affection and applause. If I lift my voice it is not in anger ; I have not forgotten that they have often defended their country, though in a moment of weakness, they exposed it's fate! I have not forgotten that they have steered the vessel prosperous and safe through the tempest of war, and the night of revolution; that in the strife and anarchy of all the moral elements, in the chaos and confusion, and darkness and collision, of every principle and passion of man, they have maintained him in society, and defended for him,

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the laws and the religion of liberty; the well-being, the enjoyments, the advantages and endearments of civilized life; the just ambition, the aspiring virtue, the pious hope, the sanctity of his nature! That they have kept alive the sacred spark, the particle of the breath divine, the dignity of life and the sacred sustaining hope of immortality!

From that prosperous defeat, from that fortunate disgrace, from that happy calamity, from the very hour and moment in which we turned our back upon Lille, our affairs have assumed another aspect, every sun has shone out brighter, and a warmer glow has gilded our horizon. The victory of the eleventh of October, notwithstanding our resolution to derive no advantage from it, gave security to our shores and seas. Other victories of less intrinsic importance, but equally demonstrative of our maritime superiority, have followed

ed without a change or intermission of fortune, and the only invaders we have beheld or apprehended, have been a host of captives flowing into our jails, and polluting our land with abominable corruptions, of which the very name is hateful, and proscribed in the ears of modesty and nature *. Since that period the resources and the loyalty of the country have progressively discovered and advanced themselves. The genius of the island waked. The voluntary service, the military force arose with private zeal and public patriotism. The generosity of the people came—nipped indeed and chilled in the bud by averted suns, and by the penury of that royal stream which should have fed it's roots and made it spring and blow, and burst into sudden fullness and maturity.—Still it broke forth, and with it a

Voluntary
Subscrip-
tions.

* It is absolutely necessary to repress the horrible depravity of the prisoners, by some peculiar police either civil or military.

new vigour and a new energy; a nobler policy, and a loftier spirit from the knowledge of their virtues and their strength; the people assumed a new character, if that may be called so, which was the character of their ancestors, and is the true palladium of the country! They abandoned and threw off at least that factitious and ingrafted meanness, which the arts of a hypocritical party, together with the wavering objects of the war, and the embassies and affected moderation of the ministers had inserted upon their stock.

I speak with peculiar pleasure of the disposition of the people, because I have often blamed it, when the reproach was more useful than deserved: or deserved more by those who had made it what it was, and omitted to make it what it ought to have been. From that period, however, the public spirit has expanded and aspired. The people have
spoken

spoken out, and pushed one just and generous cry against that inglorious and wretched truce, which we called and implored as peace, that vile and cowardly reprieve which we solicited as mercy, those mean and murderous prayers which, fortunately for our very being, were not accepted by the malignant deities to whom we addressed them. Since that period, the country has given proofs almost unparalleled of energy and patriotism; never did any history shew a people more generous, more enlightened, more loyal, more united. No government had ever less excuse to complain of the spirit of the people. None has ever derived such important aids from individual zeal and voluntary concurrence: None from the wisdom, none from the patience, none from the generosity of the people; and this in spite of discouragement, in spite of coldness, in spite of the very worst example in the very highest places

places; in spite of that late and niggardly return, from those whose duty it was not only to be generous, but to give the example of generosity; in spite of the silence of those to whom it looked with the parent in the drama, and said, "*I gave you all;*" in spite of ministerial and noble avarice which closed the flood-gates of the national liberality, which cut off the waters at their source, or forced them where they flowed into narrow and lazy conduits, measured and counted drop by drop, and drawn off from the great stream of the public revenue!

Was this a time for those who called aloud for ingenuous sacrifices from every purse, from every man's estate, from income, from industry, from inheritance, from profession,—I say, was this a time for them to discuss more loudly the comparative dignity of a peer and a privy counsellor, and the just proportions

proportions of their pomp and extravagance? Was this a time to assert the divine right of pluralists in their offices, and the sacred tenure of fees and emoluments! Was this a time to dispute of metaphysical freeholds, and deny the power of the public over the public purse? Were cares and interests like these to supercede the dignity of public example, and the duty of succouring the public necessity? Could it be wondered at if the peers of the realm, who were placed, I know not how constitutionally, behind the ministers in dignity, were afraid of giving offence, if they had exceeded them in liberality? If they avoided sedulously a generosity which might have trench-
 Voluntary Contributions.
 ed upon the rank of their superiors, and violated the etiquette of precedency? And is it not to be wondered at, is it not to be applauded to the very skies, that the spirit of the people should have overcome this heavy and depressing fog, should have chased the vapour, and dispersed the mist that hung over them? Is it not

Voluntary
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tions.

not consoling that the impulse of the public mind was not completely overpowered and suppressed? Is it not consoling that the public generosity has overflowed the dikes and banks that were opposed to it? That the infant was not overlaid or starved by the extravagant and brawling nurse, quarrelling for perquisites and dry at the breast! That it escape the dangers of it's cradle? That in spite of all these step-dame arts, and though it's very parents would not smile, it has grown and flourished, and may yet become the Pollio or the Alcides of the state?

It has been then in vain to disclaim the use of victory, or to depress the public generosity.—A public spirit which cannot be crushed, has arisen from both, but from nothing more than the sense of our happy deliverance, from the contemplation of the dangers to which we were exposed. I will not say how much the press, the great moral power of government,

government, has contributed to the safety of the state. But nothing more than the press has shewn or created, the spirit of the country. Men of all ranks and professions, and of every party (while there was party in the kingdom) have subscribed their talents and forgotten their resentments in the public cause. The ministers have friends, whom the dangers of their country have made their friends, and who have hearkened to nothing but their duty. Need I mention circumstances not less fortunate nor less auspicious to the safety and final triumph of the kingdom? the conversion I will not say of all that was virtuous, in our parties, but of all that was not lost to virtue and tired of her; of all that was not sick and weary of the dregs of reputation; all that was not mad as well as wicked, all that was not prepared and resolute to throw off even the hypocrisy that gave them power to do mischief, and to disarm their treachery by professing their malevolence. Conspiracies were
F detected,

detected, clubs despised and ridiculed, a new light broke in upon the people, and shewed in their native colours of depravity, those pretended *friends*, whose only services had been to invite the enemy into the country, to weaken our force and discourage our efforts, and expose and betray us to the enemy they invited. The country was saved. A spirit had gone forth, and it breathed fresh health and vigour on the land. Every breast beat high, and every hand was armed; and though the tempest howled from the opposite shore, and every wind wafted the din of preparation, the kingdom never shewed a more serene and untroubled aspect. The rebellion in Ireland, the first present of France to that unhappy country, produced no sensation here but of pity for the wretched victim, and indignation against the barbarous seducer. It did not shake the public mind, it did not affect the public credit, it was not felt as a political convulsion. The disposition of the people, favourable to every great and wise design,

enabled

enabled ministers to dispose of the public force; beyond if not against the laws and limits of the constitution. While at home, as in a time of profoundest peace, they brought forward plans of a vast and salutary finance, unlocked the sources of revenue, and provided for the extinction of the debt they created. The triple assessment, the sale of the land tax, (the omen and beginning of a great and comprehensive policy) the convoy-bill, the subscriptions, the voluntary services, the military virtue and loyalty of the troops, the inextinguishable genius and character of the nation, which half a century of peace and tranquillity have not diminished nor obscured, were the answers we deigned to make to those lofty and preposterous threats of conquest and subjection, which I have treated too lightly, which I have too much despised, and taught the people to apprehend too little.

If I have this error to lay to my charge, it is because I have misjudged, either the peo-

ple or their enemies. But I have been mistaken, and I am grateful for it, in neither instance; I knew them and I knew the enemy, and I knew from the beginning that they had nothing to fear but from disappointment; that they would one day regret the vanity of his threats, and the non-performance only of the experiment which he announced with so much noise and ostentation! St. Marcou had not yet been attempted, their boasted battering-vessels had not yet been precipitated into the waters, nor their legions put to flight by a handful of invalids and marines, while our ships of war becalmed and immovable were compelled to suffer their escape—ought I now to change this opinion?

The menace of invasion, I do not doubt will continue as long as the war, and if it is not permitted to enquire with what probability of performance, what likelihood of execution and success, and to what extent and degree.

degree, it will, I fear, be impossible to relieve the country from a great part of it's present burthens and expenditure, which I confess I desire to see accomplished. If we are to trust nothing to our glorious navy, if the apprehension of a partial descent is to cause a general armament, and the fear of a handful of banditti landing upon our coast, perpetually to entail upon us the expence and fatigue and tension of the present summer.—It will be absurd in the enemy to intermit his threats, and in vain for us to attempt to support our efforts, without a finance of still more efficacy, than what I have applauded. The more I consider the nature, circumstances and objects, of the present war, the more deeply I am convinced that it will not terminate before the lapse of many years, unless in the event of circumstances, which (however probable or near) we are not the masters to create or accelerate. The more, therefore, do I feel the necessity of diminishing
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it's expence and pressure to the utmost point consistent with our defence and security, in order that we may be able to endure and preserve ourselves for these circumstances.—The war has now no dangers but the charges it brings with it; the tax gatherer is the real enemy we have to contend with. A right estimation, therefore, of the power of the republic to invade us, of the practibility and extent of her expeditions, and of the sincerity of her menaces, is absolutely necessary to enable us to make these reforms in the conduct of the war, which are the true economy. An economy in the salaries of placemen, a retrenchment in the perquisites of office, a sacrifice of some useless parade and pomp, even from the dignity of cabinet ministers; of some sinecures and emoluments, and of all but one of the offices which are now held by pluralists and engrossers of the public bounty, might be desireable no doubt, and just and becoming during the war

at least, but it is desirable chiefly as example and encouragement to other men, to make their sacrifices in their turn, and divide those salutary privations which are to save the state. But I confess that in themselves I think they would not amount to any great mass of values, nor sustain alone any great branch of the public service or of the war. It is the war itself that is to be compressed and diminished. It is the millions once wasted in Corsica and St. Domingo that are now to be spared and withheld, and if the past abuses there cannot be enquired into, at least to be denied and forbidden for the future. It is extravagance of every species and every name, that is now at last to be watched and subdued. It is profusion which is never not corrupt, that is to be absolutely suppressed, whether in barracks or in public buildings of any nature, in staffs, appointments, salaries, or half-pay.—It is a spirit and a system of economy, a general and pervading system, neither mean for the state, nor

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nor oppressive to individuals, but salutary to the country, but consoling to the people, but formidable to the enemy!

It is a state, I will repeat it again and again, of defence, of duration, and economy.—It is not violent effort, it is not expenditure and exertion; it is not hostile and multiplied expeditions, nor the wildest of them all diplomatic expeditions; it is not the shew and splendor and profuseness of war; it is not the meanness and madness, and cowardice of any project of peace; it is not any wound we can inflict or suffer, any injury we can offer, or any humiliation we can undergo that will give us peace. It is economy—the grafting and setting upon the system of government itself and incorporating as a part of the natural order and conduct of affairs, that qualified defensive and fastidious war, which the barbarous policy and methodized wickedness of France

have

have imposed upon every free and virtuous nation. It is the right of every nation to be respected and to maintain its character.

It is time alone with economy (without which we may not wait the time) it is magnanimity and good faith in our counsels, it is explicitness in our objects, it is firmness and generosity in our resolutions, it is example from on high, to nourish and maintain the national spirit and the national liberality, that must give us peace, when peace is peace.—It is the defensive war incorporated as a system, it is the dignity of our position and attitude; it is the calmness and tranquillity with which we prepare for the peculiar circumstances and trials of the times.

—It is the temper we oppose and the patience with which we meet the fury and the violence that prey upon their own strength, and consume their materials.—It is the fortitude with which we confront the danger, the constancy with which we support the pres-

sure, the proud spirit which belongs to the sense of right and the consciousness of virtue. It is the just assertion of our character and our cause, the publicity of our objects, the fixed certainty of our ends, which can alone accelerate the moment of peace, or enable us to await it. Such a war let us wage with France, so proud, so contemptuous if you will, as the civilized states of Europe wage with the pirates of Barbary, as the states of America with the savages of their frontiers, such a war as the traveller with banditti, as the citizen with thieves.

I shall again be told that I under-rate and decry the enemy: and again unjustly.—France I know it, is a *great nation*. Who, more than myself have shewn the danger of her greatness? But she is a great nation, as a giant is a great man.—The consciousness of her force is her courage, and she relies upon her bulk for success.—She possesses no moral superiority

superiority to other nations; she has no arts unknown to us, no superiority of talents and address, no arms that we do not wield, no science that we do not employ. Her weight is her sole preponderance. Her physical strength is her only boast. Why then consider her preposterous menace of invasion, even suppose our navy out of the way, with all this terror and apprehension,—are we no more than naked natives of some new-discovered isle, who know no empire but our own, who had never seen the waters ploughed, nor heard the cannon's thunder, nor beheld the features of another race of men? Or have our troops fled before this giant on the continent? Or has he never landed on our soil and been conquered there? Has he never aided our rebels in other times? Are these the first threats he has made, or the first injuries he has inflicted? And when he has perished on our shores or in our seas, will it be any thing new in the history of his defeats and calamities?

But granting for a moment that I have under-rated the enemy. It is not the worst enemy that I under-rate. *That* enemy I dread with a panic fear;—I tremble at *expenditure*. This is the great alternative between ministers and me. I dread France too little, and they too little from expenditure.—I would trust something to our navy and to our people. They will rely entirely upon our purse. I would also call in economy. I trust they will here go along with me. If they do not, I confess I cannot long trust to the navy, or the people, or to any thing. But if it should turn out that the preparations and armaments of the enemy upon the other side of the water, have not been in fact of the extent and magnitude, or even of the nature they believed; that their apprehensions have been unreasonable, or unfounded, or very much exaggerated.—If it should be proved by the event that the enemy never has possessed the means of invading

vading us with a formidable power, has never assembled fleets or even armies in his ports; to the degree that ought to have created the apprehensions they have spread, and the expence they have occasioned.—Then I think it will appear not only that it is they who have under-rated the *real enemy expenditure*, but who have been duped and cajoled by the *pretended one invasion*.

I repress myself upon this point, because I would prejudge nothing; and I have no doubt but that there were other motives, at least as just and compulsory as the fear of an invasion, which it would have been premature and impolitic to avow, for the great and general armament of the kingdom—Motives which I for one will never fail to adopt and applaud. But I would neither have it be nor be believed, that every idle and intoxicated vaunt or threat of France should entail upon us, this great tension, alarm, and expence. And I hope

hope it may be clearly understood in France, as well as here and in the public of Europe, that it is not the fear of her open and military hostility, but her secret practice and wickedness, and a danger which she cannot renew, which have caused the present preparation and expenditure.

Governments, I suspect, cannot any longer be maintained, under the new and peculiar exigences of these times, by the old maxims they have found in their offices, or the political testaments of their predecessors. The public have drawn nearer to them, the middle space has been contracted, and the common interests and union of the people and the state are become more intimate and visible.—It is by an appeal to the understanding, the affections and the virtues of the people, that we have been able to bear the brunt and tryal of the day.—It is the people who have pronounced between the early seductions of a
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false and flattering philosophy, and the temperate liberty they enjoyed.—It is the people who rejected the base and sensual allurements of anarchy and licentiousness when she dropped her mask, and called them to her bed of lust, and her banquet of blood.—It is the people who have refused equality and pillage. It is the people who have decreed in favour of the laws, the constitution, and the religion of their fathers.—The cause of humanity has not been judged by an edict of the prætor, or the rescript of a prince.—It has been tried *corum populo*, it has been absolved by a verdict of the people.—It is their good sense, it is their good faith, it is their justice, it is their magnanimity.—I do not detract from the glory of those who have pleaded this sacred cause.—I revere their courage and their labours, I admire their eloquence, I would worship, if their service were perfect freedom, their talents and their virtues.—But all the powers of the orator which I know well to praise,

praise, if they were not above praise, could not have defended it without the integrity of the judge.—The ministers have combated for their country, but it is the people who have saved it.

I could never tire upon this theme. It is and will be the salvation of the country.—The people have rejected with equal wisdom and with equal firmness, the enthusiasm of virtue and of vice.—They have refused with equal scorn the counter-fanaticism of piety, the crusade of virtue, the follies of the wise. They have made no war of dismemberment; none of religion. Their war has always been the war of justice and necessity.—If ever their spirit has been damped, or their energy repressed, it has been owing to the artifice and the weakness of their leaders and their misleaders.—Example has been abundant for evil, and miserably wanting for good. They have resisted seduction, they have triumphed over neglect,

neglect, they have uniformly desired peace, but neither the peace of opposition nor the peace of ministers, neither the peace with Robespierre, nor the peace at Lille. The peace they desired was a safe, an honourable, a real, and a lasting peace; and if at any time it has been necessary to reproach them with too much eagerness in the pursuit of it, it was because their cry was hurtful though their desire was honest: their impatience erred, but their principle was pure and enlightened.

Have we forgotten the greatness of their mind, when they supported that which has been ever deemed insupportable, when they struggled with famine and with treachery; when treason retired disappointed from the hustings, and confessed that not a murmur could be purchased from their misery, nor a complaint extorted from their despair? Have we forgotten the good sense and fortitude with which they gave up reform, when they saw

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reform demanded by traitors and enemies to their country? How they have resisted every snare which has been laid in turns for their virtues and their passions, and always for their prejudices and feelings? Always for the natural regrets and repinings of the human lot and condition of existence? What has their spirit not overcome, over what has not their virtue triumphed? It has conquered the despondency which spread from the abject and pernicious project of the peace, it has pierced through it's last discouragement, the selfishness and meanness of those whose high and whose highest duty it was to offer the first sacrifices, to lead the way and to give the example. It has subdued every obstacle: the frauds and seduction of it's enemies, the lukewarmness and pusillanimity of it's friends. Is it an idle panegyric that I am bestowing upon the people? I am not used to flatter them. Those are facts that I assemble, in order to prove from a strong and sure foundation, that
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their relation to the government is become more intimate and closer; that it is impossible with prudence or dignity and without injustice and ingratitude, to think of conducting their affairs any longer with the annual artifice of administrations; that they have a right to be trusted with the whole secret of their situation. I say that they have a right, and that they have proved themselves worthy and fit to enjoy it. I would not say to such a people as this, grant me supplies and I will procure you peace.—Vote this, and I will send plenipotentiaries.—I would disclaim all delusion and abandon every species of mystery, I would tell them plainly, this is your position, that is your duty, here is your interest, there is your honour.—You are at war, and you ought to be so; peace is utterly unattainable, and I will not deceive nor depress your courage by attempting it in vain.—I demand supplies to defend the country not to betray it, to make it safe and powerful by

arms, not to expose it by weakness and disarmament. There is no peace with the exorbitant power of the enemy. There is no peace with his immorality and corruptions as long as they are maintained and propagated and imposed by his power. I impose burthens therefore, and I demand privations from you for what they are inevitably required, to defend your liberty, your commerce, your empire, your laws, your property, your religion, your industry, your arts, your enjoyments, your morals, and in one word your happiness. For this I ask these sacrifices, I would be able to add, and *I have given you the example*. For this I have satisfied you that there is no lavishment, no waste, no abuse, no corruption, no perversion of the resources of the state. I have suffered no one to profit by the public distresses, none to thrive upon your calamities. My care is not more to augment your revenues than to reduce your outgoings. ECONOMY in every department of the state,

in every service of the war, in the system and conduct of it, is my engagement, my object, and the instrument by which I propose to triumph over the malice and obstinacy of the enemy. Perhaps the very appearance of it may give us peace. It may at once defeat his expectations from our past prodigality and excess: or if it should fail of this natural and desirable effect, it will at least enable us to remain at our post, to endure and preserve ourselves for more fortunate events.

That this is the language of truth as well as wisdom I have little doubt; and that it is our true policy not only to pursue this conduct, but to hold this language. For the people require nothing but the confidence of government to prepare for their true situation. They want only to be trusted by their rulers; they need only to be told that war is their natural state and position, to become a warlike, as well as an armed nation. They have
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courage to hear if we have but resolution to speak out. I entertain no fear, and admit no excuse from their despondency or impatience. Their spirit will never fail, their patience will never tire, if they are convinced of the necessity of their exertions, of the explicitness and magnanimity of the government in the objects of the war, and its economy in the conduct of it.

What these fortunate events shall be, for which we ought to endure and preserve ourselves; it is scarce necessary to examine or enquire. Whether a new confederation shall arm the continent of Europe and repress the common disturber within the girdle of his state.—Whether the powers of the north uniting with America and Britain shall interdict the navigation of the seas to his piratical flag—whether his deceived and disappointed armies shall turn their vengeance on his head—or his wretched and insulted people rise with
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some general and resistless impulse to shake him from their neck—whether weakness, lassitude, and absolute exhausture will be the only term and boundary of his violence—whether these events shall happen separately or at once, and in what order or with what intervals of time, it is impossible to foretel, and useless to conjecture. The last of them is his inevitable doom unless it is prevented and anticipated by one or other of the rest. It is our part to expect and not to accelerate it, and to perform this part well is a duty from which no pressure, no privation can dispense us. To diminish that pressure and to circumscribe these privations is the first duty of government; the second is to partake in our lot, and to give us the example.

I have heard it said that my advice is good but that it is impracticable? Impracticable, a cold and damning word, congealing the breath of counsel and the pulse of action. What then

then is this dull and negative quality and where does it reside? In the government, in the people, or between both? It is important to learn and know from whom and from whence it arises. For if it is conceded that the counsels I have given are just, and wise, and virtuous, and desirable, how unfortunate is it that they are *impracticable*, that they are not applicable to us and to our circumstances? And what are those circumstances to which justice, wisdom, virtue, are not applicable? It is indeed a singular position of affairs, where profusion is *practicable* and not economy, where we may waste but cannot spare, where we may exhaust but may not manage our resources, where violence and effort are possible but not fortitude and patience; where the more is easier than the less! I have seen enough however in the course of no very long life, to know that things become *practicable* when they become really desired, and when ministers set their shoulders to them: else id-

It has been applauded as an high and generous resolution, which came from both sides of the House of Commons, that in case the French effected their invasion, it should be death and infamy to propose to treat with

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them, so long as a regiment remained in arms in the kingdom. Do I not applaud it also? Wherefore should I not applaud it? But how can those persons who admire or approve these counsels condemn or censure mine? I will answer with any pledge of life and honour, that during this war, if there is but common prudence upon our side, that France shall never be able to invade you. Upon the terms of peace therefore I think it depends, whether the power shall be restored to her of invasion, which now she does not possess. But which she will possess in three weeks after the signature of peace, if these counsels are censured and condemned. If peace had been signed at Lille, in September, 1797, does any one doubt that she would now have possessed the power of invasion? Would she not have assembled in the port of Brest alone the fleets of Spain and Holland, of Venice and of Toulon? Would not Buonaparte have fitted out in the channel? — Oh, but she would have been pacific: How
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pacific, let the Emperor of Germany declare. Let the advocates of that peace, if I have left one in the nation, tell me, if they think the three coloured flag would not have been displayed in London? If we should not now have been utterly subdued and broken-hearted, a province of France, and a republic of felons? Or at best at war once more with the French Republic, possessing hundred ships of the line in our channel, outflanking our coast, threatening us with every wind, ready to sail, and able to cover her invasion, able and ready to fulfill these empty boasts, and realize those proposterous threats which I am so culpable in despising?

With a people so united and so highminded as ours, I will not only not apprehend any thing from invasion, but I will consider nothing as impracticable which they will decree, not even ECONOMY itself if they will command it. And I think they cannot hesitate be-

tween that economy which will protract the war, till they can obtain a real and a glorious peace; and that profusion which experience shews, will only precipitate them upon a false, an infamous, and an armed peace. God forbid they should decree any thing but peace, when peace is attainable, for it will never be so, till the enemy so far from having power to impose or to grant it, shall be spent and prostrate at their feet, and under the visible necessity of receiving it such as they will grant.

If economy is impracticable, it is useless and even hurtful to shew the resources of the state. They are better concealed than employed without economy. They might be the fortune of happier times, and the reversion of more provident inheritors.—It appears to me, however, that *we can endure* till the issue of the contest, and as I have been called upon by great authority to prove it, I am not afraid nor unwilling to undertake the task. I well
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know the hopes of France are not founded upon the success of any expeditions. I well know the combinations of Europe are not calculated upon the collision of arms.—It is to the failure of our resources, and the impatience of our people under inevitable pressures, that our rancourous enemies and our interested friends turn their eyes alike though with opposite emotions. I am not alone to blame then who dread so much from expenditure and so little from invasion? I have shewn already what the spirit of this people is; it will not be denied that with such a spirit the resources of a state, whatever they may be, are within the reach of government; it's authority will encrease with the public danger, it's power will extend with the public fear or necessity. Whoever will consider the physical state of a country and finds it prosperous, may conclude it to be invincible, if it's moral state is good also; if there is agreement and concurrence between the government and the nation, if there

is a "patriot prince at the head of an united people." It is this common cause, this sentiment, this union which makes government the real master and disposer of the public fortune.

It is very extraordinary (if any thing can now be considered so) that an enemy, envious of our prosperity and gasping for our wealth, attempting loans upon the reversion of our commerce, and mortgaging the harvests of our fields; should yet found it's only hopes of success upon our poverty and exhaustion. In other times it would have appeared inconsistent in a government, to say to it's people, "Your enemies are ruined," and to it's armies, "they are gorged with gold;" to say to the people "they are at their last resource," and to the armies, "they have the hundred thousand millions of sterling gold that we have promised you. He is a fool who looks for any other mine!" The people of France are in this case the dupe, for I will confess with my
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habitual imprudence, that the French armies will find very good quarters here if they will come and take them. Yes, we are very rich, and our riches are daily encreasing, and that during the war: and if the war is conducted with the prudence we may derive from experience, we shall continue to be enriched either by it or in spite of it. America will relieve us of a great part of our expenditure in the West Indies. We shall devote no more millions, and no more armies, to the rash and impracticable project of Saint Domingo. The domestic armament and pay is refunded into our own bosom, it falls back upon our own manufactures and consumption. I know but of one class that has suffered by the war, an interesting one indeed but the least efficient in the state, and as it the best and purest, and most enlightened in it; the one which most readily submits to privations of which it acknowledges the necessity. I speak of the middling class as it is called, but of the first, if men were rated by learning, by probity,

bity, by manners or sanctity of life; the guardian of the English features, the English character, and the English virtues, whose influence is felt above and below, and connects the extremes of society, restraining the vices of the great, and encouraging and receiving the virtuous below them.—This class has been I think unwarily oppressed, while every other has been not only prosperous but relieved. I will not refer the great minister who calls me to the proof, to the statistical accounts of the empire, to the books of the Custom House, to the reports of the select committee of the House of Commons, to the number of canal and enclosure bills, nor to other public results of our enterprize, our fortune, or our improvement. I refer him to the direct amelioration of the condition and well-being of the people—to the universal encrease of wages in every class of labour and agriculture in the pay of the army and the fleet. The poor and industrious of every name have been indemnified by augmented wages for every tax that

that reaches them, and ministers have taken the most laudable and exemplary care that these should be very few; our rich do not know what taxation is. We take from their heap, but not from them; from their banker, and not their use. Trade shifts every tax upon the consumer even with a profit to itself; but consumption encreases with the general well-being of society, with population, with general speculation and success. And it is impossible to see the perpetual progress of building, the encrease of our towns and capital, which whatever may be said to the contrary, preserves only it's proportion with the country, without seeing also the progress and encrease of our fortune and our population.

But the public debt has advanced more rapidly than all this improvement! That, it is impossible to demonstrate. It has advanced, however, and that so fast as to make me call *aloud* for economy. Yet I confess I do not see the

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danger commonly apprehended, even by great statesmen, from the public debt. The public annuity (as it would be more proper and useful to call it, for the other term perplexes and misleads) has increased, I acknowledge, enormously: but I am not convinced that it has increased beyond the ratio of improvement. I am not convinced, that the dividends accruing annually at the Bank are equal to a greater portion of the gross income of the kingdom, than they have been at several periods since the revolution. And I am perfectly unacquainted with any reasons that ought to induce our enemies to think us less able to contribute in the same ratio from our gross revenue, than we were in 1712, or in 1747, or in 1782, or in the last year of any war since the revolution.

Our present annuity does not, I think, exceed fifteen millions. In Jan. 1797, it was 13,430,644 and a fraction. I am inclined to think, that, compared with any former period

of war, it will be found to represent a smaller part of the gross revenue, not only from the improvement of land, and the increase of commerce, but from a circumstance of still greater import, though chiefly derived from them, namely, the reduced comparative value of money: By which I suspect the equation imperceptibly, but without error or intermission, to be struck between our annuity and our income. I shall content myself for the present with throwing out this idea into the public. I am sensible it requires to be argued with a minuteness, an accuracy and detail, which would be misplaced at present. It's importance will be felt whether it's justness be immediately perceived or not. For if it is founded in truth, there is then no absolute or necessary term of what is called public credit, no period or bourn beyond which a prosperous country *cannot* borrow. For my present argument it is sufficient, that debt (to employ that word) is not to be considered

considered abstractedly; if it were, the richest individuals and the most prosperous states, would be found invariably to be the most indebted. The sinking fund, the one per cent, the annual million, are a considerable set-off to our annuity: and we have still better securities to offer for our mortgage. The public spirit is the surest pledge, but the general land-tax, to which we may confidently look forwards, and which will soon be demanded by the general voice of the country, is the certain means and epocha of our financial relief. There is no reason to think we shall sink under our annuity. If they have no better hope, and I think they have not, I command the enemies of England to despair.

Shall I be told, that though we possess inexhaustible resources, though every thing is prosperous, manufactures, commerce, credit, exchange, improvement of every sort, yet it signifies

signifies nothing? disaffection, treason, Jacobinism will cut off all, and intercept the hand of government? I disdain to consider as a general evil, those clubs and traitors, who dishonour our name, indeed, but cannot bring our state into danger, who plot but their own ruin, and lay snares only for themselves. Let our enemies despair this charm also; let them look at the common contempt and infamy which have fallen upon treachery of every sort and in every station; let them behold the scorn and odium from which no rank, no talents, no birth, no services, no abilities have been able to screen the abettors of revolution! The just resentments of the crown faithfully echoed by the public indignation, have spoken in thunder to the chairmen of anarchy and revolt. Let them shew me a single traitor whom infamy and the curses of the people have not overtaken. Let them point out a voice, a gesture, or a sign of public opinion, which

which does not prove the real union of the country, and assure the safety of the state.

If the state then possesses the resources I have shown, and if there exists in the people the spirit I have described, what hinders, but that we may *await* with fortitude and patience, the events we hope for, or the consummation we expect? And if these resources are managed with economy, and this spirit nursed, and reared, and improved by the candour and the example which it deserves, what hinders but that we may govern circumstances and shape events, and regain by our wisdom and dignity, that confidence and that influence which we have lost in the cabinets of the continent, by those mean and impolitic projects, of which we have falsely rejected the infamy upon the people?

I think, therefore, that TIME is our faithful and sincere ally, and though I am perfectly

perfectly aware of the disadvantage and unpopularity of a defensive war, though I see and acknowledge all the motives for endeavouring to accelerate the period of peace, and perceive the possibility of attempting it once more by a triple coalition upon the continent ; yet that is a measure in which I cannot concur, and which I cannot induce my mind to recommend as wise, or prudent, or desirable for this country in particular. I think the two great powers of the continent, if they are in fact returned to a sense of their honour, of their interest, or of their necessities, will not delay for a single moment to forget their complaints, and lay aside their obsolete and antiquated jealousies, and unite at last sincerely to repel the arms and the anarchy of the Republic from their borders. I think they will not hesitate for a single hour to defend the Rhine, and break up the dishonourable conferences at Radstadt. But what occasion is there for the accessit of Great Britain ? what necessity for her becoming a party or
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a guaranty to any treaty between the courts of Berlin and Vienna? Do they stand in need of her co-operation? Do they look once more for subsidies from her? Cannot Austria and Brandenburg defend the integrity of Germany without her whom the one has betrayed, and the other deserted? Do they think she has forgotten the treaties of Basil and Leoben? Or, has she found reason to repent of that wise but late policy which recalled her troops from the continent, where they were often sacrificed by their allies, but never conquered by their enemies? Do they perceive in our cabinet any weariness of popularity, any disgust or quarrel they have taken to public applause and unanimity? Or, have they discovered any inconvenience or danger that have resulted from relying upon our own means, our own courage, and our own people, that we should once more trust the smallest part of our fortune or our hopes, to the arms of foreigners? I see no room for the entry of

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Great Britain; I see no character in which she can appear, no part which she is to act in this treaty. Our influence, that is to say our arguments, cannot have been wanting to shew these courts their true interests and their honour, nor our endeavours to reconcile and unite them. Our credit at the court of Peterburgh cannot but have been employed to soften difficulties and remove fears and suspicions:—I do not know what more can be expected from us. The war we maintain with France, and the war impending between France and America, are points of concurrence, but not of cooperation with the cabinets of Germany. Can the Cuirassiers of Prussia, or the grenadiers of Hungary, unite with our fleets, to double blockade the ports of France and her vassals? Can America and Britain send armies to Italy and the Rhine? If there is any cooperation, I trust it will be a cooperation of morality and honour. A^mcommon, and a public, and a sincere and firm en-

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gement and bond of faith, to restore the status quo of 1789, to disclaim any dismemberment of the Republic, or any attempt upon its constitution *.

I am deeply convinced, that England can render no services to Europe beyond those which she now performs, by remaining at war with the common enemy; and that if she could, there are no others so essential and beneficial to the general cause: But if any declaration be expected from her, that she will make no more expeditions to Lille, nor ever lay down her arms, but upon the altar of a real and per-

* When I disclaim an attempt upon the French Constitution, I desire to be understood, that it is against all interference in the internal affairs of France, that I protest, as a *preliminary of peace*, not as a mode of hostility: and I enter even this protest not against it's justice, but it's wisdom and utility. Whoever can procure for France a free election of representatives, and free instructions from the constituent, will have given her the constitution she wants, and the rest will follow easily.

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manent peace, it is a security which she can now scarce pretend to consider as superfluous, and which Europe, perhaps, has some reason to demand. Of such a peace I have endeavoured to prove there exist but two alternatives, the state before the war, and the state after it. It is the interest of Europe, doubtless, to compel the former, and it is certain, that it cannot be compelled unless the great powers of her continent shall take up arms, before England shall lay down her's. Some good may have been done, even at Lille, if the conduct of Great Britain there has opened the eyes of those courts. For if the peace which she proposed had been accepted, there was an end, and they know it well, of their independence and of their thrones; the world was abandoned and betrayed. It is not therefore troops or subsidies that they have to expect from England: it is not her interference, nor her co-operation, that they have to procure or to sti-

pulate, but to hasten with good faith the issue
 of their own contest, while her generous
 counsels and her mighty arm employ and dis-
 tract the genius and the power of their enemy.
 I wish the eloquence, the science and the
 great weight of character, which have distin-
 guished me with their notice, had been em-
 ployed to impress these truths upon the
 cabinets of the continent : I wish these
 maxims, and this just and honourable po-
 licy, were enforced at Berlin and Vienna
 with that ability and that irresistible autho-
 rity with which that great statesman could
 not fail to plead the cause of wisdom and
 of justice. For my own humble part, I
 confess, that had I power in the public
 councils of this kingdom, or influence upon
 the public opinion, I would employ it to con-
 demn and reject every project of confederation
 whatsoever. That by our own arms I would
 stand or fall ; that I would rely upon no faith,

no virtue, no wisdom, no magnanimity but
our own.

I have already laid it down in another place,
that we make alternate resistance against
the barbarous inroads of France, with the
states of the continent. It is better for them
that we should concur than alternate. Their
war will doubtless diminish our pressure, and
relieve us from a great part of our present
defensive establishment: Are they therefore
to be paid and compensated for this service?
In that case they will render us no service at
all, but, on the contrary, we shall be injured by
their assistance: for not only will our expen-
diture be the same, but it will be spent abroad,
without return or benefit to us; and we shall
be disarmed instead of armed by our expendi-
ture. Now it cannot be contended, that it
is not wise for us to be armed to the full ex-
tent that our finances will maintain. And if
the states of the continent will even now drive
a bar-

a bargain with us, and cannot even now determine to resist their enemies, till they have first pillaged their allies; I protest I see as yet very little security to be reposed in their good faith, and very little advantage to be expected from their cooperation. If, after all the experience they have had of french perfidy and french plunder, they will still extort an equivalent from England for services it is not in their power to withhold from her, without betraying and destroying themselves, I think they must be left to their own counsels: they are neither fit, nor entitled, nor worthy to be saved by her.

I can scarce condescend to discuss these base and sordid questions of equivalent: but there cannot, surely, be any one so idle as not to see the advantage these powers will derive from disengaging England from the menace of invasion upon her own islands, first by prolonging her power and means of resistance in general, and secondly, by enabling her fleets to

act offensively against France, not only in her own seas, but in the ocean, the Mediterranean, and wherever else it may be possible to pursue her desperate adventures; and while the whole of her coast is kept in check and alarm by our naval enterprize, shall we operate no diversion in our turn of her force from the Rhine or the Adige?

I do not, however, compute the war upon the continent as one of these circumstances which are necessary to enable us to endure. I am sure, that with economy, and attention to the public spirit, we can endure without any collateral aid and assistance; and while we do so, if no war should take place at all, what is the consequence for France? The continent will respire, while she is exhausted and consumes; her enemy recovers, while she pants and bleeds; every hour takes something from her strength, and adds it to her danger; while she wastes and decays, and tends to dis-

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solution, the power of Austria inhales a new youth, and a new health, and a new vigour. Her new dominions are consolidated and coalesced, her defences are prepared, her communications opened, her troops recruited, her revenues repaired. But what revenue has France if there is peace on the continent? or can she plunder afresh, without creating war? What finance has she at home? what just and permanent sources of income? Let us suppose her to forbear her vexations in foreign states, the war must then be supported by her credit or by taxation. Her credit is nothing without the bayonette; her taxation too requires an army.—But suppose her taxation peaceable, is it not here that I expect her? is it not here that she will regret her commerce, her industry, her consumption? will she not at last perceive the loss of her nobles and her merchants? but she will make her impositions direct and numerical; she will excise every

house and every head ! will she not miss then at length her population ? will she not deplore her castles burned and her cities razed and ploughed over ? will she not lament her empty villages and her untilled fields ?

I know of no alternative under which time is not unfavourable to France, as well as favourable to her enemies. If she cannot or dare not tax herself, she must plunder and usurp. In that case, unless I much misjudge the state of Europe, new wars await her. If she taxes, I think there is some danger for her government, and a certain period of debility and physical exhaustion for the nation. If she escapes both of these, I do not still perceive the danger which M. de Calonne apprehends for England. I cannot fear from the " expedition with which she may construct ships, nor the interval she may consume without putting them to sea." Without peace she never can possess a body of seamen ; with this

M caution

caution and delay she will not possess a sailor, she will lose her art along with her artificers. This formidable marine, prepared but unemployed, equipped with all it's masts and blocks, it's canvass and it's cordage, perfect in ribs of oak and iron, but unmanned or manned with requisitions of landmen, I will dread as I do a carcase without a soul.

TIME, however, I am told not only is and will be, but has been our enemy—upon matter of fact it is not expected that I should bow to any authority.—There is no presumption in contending for the past. The past is most properly our own. The past, from which providence has taken his Almighty hand, upon which he has exhausted his eternal power. Here I may contend with M. de Calonne, as if I were his equal, and I will vindicate, at least with a grateful mind, the benefits we have derived from time. To do this at length would be to set down the history

tory of the war and the revolution; I confine myself to narrower bounds. If the war with all its errors and all its calamities, with all its misconduct, and all its misfortunes, with all its prodigality and waste, with its defeats and surrenders, with its wrecks and its fevers, unbalanced by any suffering or disaster of the enemy, uncompensated by any victory or any acquisition of our own.—If the war with all its real and imputed evils, with all those from ourselves, from our enemies, and from above, exaggerated to the very height and pitch of malice and detraction, has obtained but this one naked solitary benefit of *time*, for Europe, I think it has been cheaply purchased with our bravest blood, and our purest tears—If it has only kept back our people from the medicated bowl and treacherous banquet, while those who had feasted on them had time to perish and transform, and make known by their blotches and their cries the poisons they had swallowed—If it has only

given *time* to the world to wait the event and contemplate the example, I can regret only with private sorrows it's particular sacrifices and the generous victims it has exacted—as a public man, as a member of the great commonwealth of humanity, I must applaud and be grateful.

Is time our enemy? Is time the ally and friend of our enemy, which has not only detected and unmasked his plots, but made himself abjure and renounce and execrate the barbarous principles he let loose upon mankind? Is time our enemy, which has punished Pethion by Robespierre, and Robespierre by Tallien? Which has thrown Tallien at the feet of Reubell and Barras? Which has made Barras and Reubell overthrow the regicide republic, and depend for impunity and existence, upon a preposterous and ridiculous usurpation? An usurpation which has neither dynasty nor antiquity, nor reverence,

rence, nor enthusiasm, nor superstition, nor
 law, nor utility, nor favour, nor any thing
 but redoubling accumulating evil, and per-
 petual growing tyranny to support it? Is
 time our enemy, which has exposed the crimes
 and consumed the resources of our enemy?
 Which has swallowed up his navy and his
 commerce, which has exhausted his plun-
 der and recruits, which has consumed his
 trades, his arts, his banks, his capitals, his
 credit, his mechanism, and manufactures?
 Which has spent his forests and despoiled?
 Which has absorbed his cities and his people?
 Or is time our enemy, which has sup-
 planted Dumouriez, Pichegru, Carnot, and
 Bartélémi, and raised up his Merlins and
 Massénas? Which has discovered his sordid
 avarice and peculation, and armed the states
 of America? Which has displayed his faith-
 less flag in the pacified capital of Germany?
 Which has opened the eyes of our people,
 detected our clubs, converted our opposition,
 and

and defeated our rebellions? Is time our enemy which has made our government repentant and ashamed of their projects and conferences, and abject petitions for peace? Which has awakened our understanding, and confirmed our spirit, and discovered our resources?

Time then, I dare to reaffirm, is the enemy of every false and vicious system, and the best friend of Britain and her cause, and of Europe, because the cause of Britain is her own. But Time without economy, without a just and provident combination of exertion and resource, I confess is pregnant of every danger and every evil. Time, like other friends, may be turned against us by our own neglect, misconduct, or abuse. If I am right, as M. de Calonne confesses, when I say we are only vulnerable in our expenditure, can I be wrong if I invoke economy? Can any thing confirm or elevate the public spirit more than the con-

viction that our affairs are managed with some
 commiseration of our sacrifices, and some ten-
 derness for our privations? And can this be re-
 conciled with foreign subsidies, and with mer-
 cenary alliances? With economy and ex-
 ample there will never be wanting in this
 country, either means or spirit, or prepared-
 ness to profit by any circumstances which may
 arise for healing the common wounds.—But
I doubt whether any profusion, or any effort
 upon our part, would tend to favour or accele-
 rate those circumstances.—It is a point upon
 which M. de Calonne, I am certain, will be
 heard with interest and respect.

May I now hope that I have shewn that
 we possess the power of remaining at our post,
 and the wisdom and propriety of doing so? If
 I have not indicated this power with more
 minuteness, and have been silent upon other
 topics upon which explanation seems to have
 been required from me, I trust it will be felt,
 that

that they are foreign to the labour I have undertaken. That there may be points upon which it could not have been my intention to explain myself, that there are others, perhaps, not fit to be discussed before the public, or with particular individuals; some which it might be personally unbecoming, others which it would be publickly prejudicial to debate aloud: and that as long as it shall be impossible for an honest man in any part of Europe, and for an Englishman in particular who has any pretensions to the public esteem, to desire the downfall or change of the king's ministers, or to consider such an event as any thing but the common ruin, revolution, and subjection of the empire, it will remain a matter of great feeling and delicacy, and require all the justness of the justest understanding, to discriminate between these errors and mistakes of government, of which it is expedient, and for their own good to tell them, and those which

which it is better and wiser to pass in present silence, or consign to eternal oblivion.

There is no opposition in our kingdom, and if the friends of government should never presume to differ from them, there would be no liberty of opinion in the first place, and in the result no benefit from discussion and collision. Whether there will ever again arise another parliamentary opposition in this country, or whether our practical constitution shall settle upon some new arch or pillar, is a question that I have not leisure to discuss under the pressure and crisis of still greater affairs. But I have no difficulty in saying, that it is now the most serious and incumbent duty of the real friends of government to supply in some degree that important chasm and defect; and giving them upon the one hand every aid and support which the general cause demands, and which the profligacy of the

last opposition, which (to use their own jargon) has identified the ministers with the constitution, renders urgent and indispensable, to assume some care and vigilance over the authority, shall I say? or the unbounded power which the necessity of the state has confided to their hands. The enemies of government have forfeited the powers of good and harm; they have lost alike the means of utility and of mischief: and if it's friends will not or may not speak, there is neither liberty nor candour, nor integrity; and there will not be, very long or very certainly, any fixed or any public policy in the management of the state.

There is one word which I shall presume to address to ministers themselves. I know I am going strongly against the current of popular opinion, but if I have never hitherto deceived the public, I have a right to expect some credit from them now. But that, per-

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haps, is immaterial. It is at best a personal feeling, as I am speaking exclusively, to those who will know I am not mistaken, and who will upon that account, give me the attention I desire. I recommend a government one and indivisible, not a federation of boards, offices, and administrations, a general central superintendence and control, an unity of power, a perfect sacrifice of individual claims, jealousies, and pretensions; of every species of official contention's and ill-timed tenacity of rights. There can preside but one mind. There can be no dispute where that guidance should be lodged. The public service will derive incalculable advantage from this new species of unanimity. I will say no more; I expect the alteration I require from the good sense and virtue of those to whom I appeal for the justice, the truth, and the propriety of my counsel.

And now if I am not deceived by a fondness for my own undertaking, I have proved the following points which I shall here assemble and arrange in their proper order and sequel, that the result may be more immediately dent, and the truth clear and irresistible.

That the state of the enemy is not such as to compel us to depart from our just principle of a balance of power.

That admitting the status quo of the year 1789 to have become unattainable, the enormous aggrandizement of France imposes upon us the necessity of extending our own means and power of resistance.

That the loss of certain alliances and defined points of reciprocal interest and assistance upon the continent, and the total disappearance of our interests and connexions there
redouble

redouble the weight and urgency of that necessity.

That it is not matter of choice, ambition, or national rivalry, but of an absolute unqualified necessity, which identifies our power with our independence, and our empire with our existence.

That defects or dangers in the state of the enemy furnish no reasonable inducements for us to consent to a peace different from that imposed upon us by our general policy, or inadequate to our relative situation.

That the expectation of misfortunes and contingent calamities in the bosom of France is neither a wise, nor a just, nor an honourable motive for us to abandon our relative aggrandizement.

That

That the reasonable belief of approaching commotions in the republic of France, far from being an argument in favour of concession would weigh directly against it, both as it affects the security of peace, and diminishes the means of hostility.

That the enemy confesses the truth of this axiom and converts it: applying it to the state of Ireland, the turbulence of our own clubs, and the profligacy of our parties, all of which circumstances induce him to continue the war.

That the peace projected by the British ministry, in August, 1797, was an unwise, a dangerous, and a dishonourable speculation.

That it was not justified by the domestic circumstances of this country, nor the relative position of the enemy.

That

That peace must be either armed or confidential.

That a dishonourable peace cannot be a safe one, and that a lasting peace cannot be bought by the sacrifice of our conquests and relative power.

That an armed peace is not preferable to our present state of war, or taken with rigour not so much preferable as to be worth the cessions by which it is to be obtained.

That a confidential peace is only to be concluded upon the basis of mutual restitutions, or of reciprocal aggrandizement.

That as long as the ambition of France shall refuse the first basis, the second is imposed by an absolute necessity upon Great Britain without choice or alternative.

That

That the policy of this country demands, and it's circumstances entitle it to enforce, that without the status quo of 1789, France shall not be permitted at the peace to recover any part of her marine, or to become a naval power at all.

That with the status quo, there is no longer any danger from the revolutionary principle.

That a general peace upon the basis of Lille will be a peace of partition and plunder, and both by the common example of immorality, and the inferiority of England revive the principle of revolutions.

That France will be of necessity jacobin and revolutionary in all the annexed and conquered territory.

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That she will draw from thence recruits and plunder, and spread and advance her principle, both by contagion and the sword.

That even supposing her to become pacific, and her government just and tutelary, her absolute dominion over Europe would be the consequence of such a peace.

That the revolutionary principle, and the notorious perfidy of the present usurpers, render it doubly incumbent upon us to watch the balance of power, and resist the dominion of France.

That peace is at this time impossible.

That war is the natural state and order of every nation that will defend it's liberty, it's constitution, property, and civil rights.

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O

That

That a peace of any kind, and of the shortest duration, will be favourable to the enemy.

That it will give him back twenty-four thousand prisoners, of whom twenty thousand are seamen.

That it will place in his hands the power of invasion, which is now an empty threat.

That it will enable him to collect the fleets of Spain, Holland, and Venice, together with all his own squadrons in the harbour of Brest, or in the channel.

That having recovered her seamen and united her sea forces, France will instantly become desirous of renewing the war.

That this desire will display her flag in London, and give open countenance to our traitors,

traitors, under the sanction and privilege of a military ambassador.

That in ordinary times, under the lawful but ambitious government of France, it would have been absurd to have relied upon the faith of any treaty which it was the imputed interest of that country to violate, or in it's power to violate with impunity, and that to count upon a greater degree of good faith, under the present circumstances and rulers of that nation, is an outrage and violation of absurdity itself.

That England has nothing to dread during the present war, but from her own expenditure.

That she possesses within herself the means of continuing, with economy, the war to an indefinite period, and of incorporating it as a constant and permanent part of her political system,

system, because she prospers during the war, and in spite of it.

That it is the interest of the powers on the continent to accelerate their resistance of the common enemy, while England remains at war with him.

That the alarm, distraction, expence and injury that he suffers from her hostility, are the sole compensation, subsidy and alliance which those powers ought to look for or require at her hands.

That time is our best friend and ally, betraying upon the one hand the immorality and the progressive turpitude of the enemy, exhausting his means, discouraging his hopes, detecting the vanity of his malice and the impotence of his revenge: and on the other discovering the resources and awakening the spirit of this country; demonstrating the real dangers

dangers and the real objects of the war, uniting the nation, and undeceiving the ministers,

That time must either engage the powers on the continent to renew the war; or, in case they remain at peace with France, that they will respire and recover from their fears and their losses, while the weakness and the dangers of France are perpetually increasing.

That the policy of the government ought to be explicitly confided to the people.

That the definitive objects of the war, ought to be explained and declared to the people; and that they ought to be such as are worthy both of the justice of our cause, and of the greatness of our power.

That the publicity of these great and honest objects will stand in the place of any security, treaty of alliance, or public bond of faith,
which

which since the project of Lillo, the powers upon the continent, may think themselves justified or obliged to demand from us.

That it will strike dismay and despondency into the heart of the enemy; and rouse, if any thing can rouse, his people to a sense of the tyranny and degradation they suffer, by shewing them that the peace they have been promised is not within the grasp of their usurpers.

That when we have withdrawn and abjured our impolitic projects and negociations, and are pledged to just and becoming objects: when the people of France shall no longer believe, that they may have peace to-morrow, or be compensated for any interval of war, by the increasing glory and advantages of the peace: when they shall see that peace and war are no longer in the folds of those robes of state in which they have tricked out their oppressors: then, and not till then, will it be

wife

wife and reasonable to expect any thing from the fears of the tyrant, or from the despair of the people.

That under all these circumstances, it is base and dishonourable to rely upon the assistance of foreigners, or the calamities of our enemy : but that we ought to repose our defence, under Providence, in our own arms and our own prudence, in the ECONOMY and example of the government, and the spirit and magnanimity of the nation.

I have nothing farther to add to these reflections but my ardent hopes, that they may have some effect in the practical government, and upon the general feeling of the country. If they are just and prudent, I trust they will be happy. Upon the peace which we shall make depends the state of Europe and of civil society. England is even now the umpire and arbitress of the world.

The treaties of Basle, of Udina, and of Radstadt, if that shall happen, are but truces and armistices, and speculations. It is our peace which will decide the fate of humanity. The perfidy, the weakness, or the cowardice of the continent may compromise, may retard, may endanger the general liberation. The cause may be betrayed, but cannot be abandoned; it may be deserted, but it cannot be lost without our own folly and our own crime. The victim may be condemned, may be bound and led to the altar, but it cannot be immolated without the seal, without the death-warrant, and the knife of Great-Britain. The principle of liberty will linger in every state; the pulse will beat at least in the moral world, while she prolongs the struggle and suspends the blow. If therefore "I have persuaded the people of Britain not to regret the rupture of the negotiation:" if I have rendered it impossible for any administra-

on to propose again, or to accept of a dangerous, a degrading, and a dishonourable peace, I have rendered a service to the cause of humanity at large, and defended every country in Europe, while I have explained the interests and vindicated the honour of my own.

END OF THE THIRD PART.

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...to the receipt of a danger
...and a dangerous period
...to the cause of human
...country in
...large and detached
...while I have enjoyed the
...of my own.



END OF THE THIRD PART.